

35 U.S.C. §103 REJECTIONS

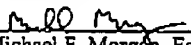
Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-16, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP844286.

In EP844286, there is no disclosure or suggestion for the substrate to which the powder coating is applied to be a film. While the substrate can be plastic (page 12, lines 11-14), there is no disclosure or suggestion of a film. A film has a different structure than an automotive part.

The argument that the thickness of the support layer could be optimized applies if and only if the cited reference disclosed a film structure. If a film were disclosed, then the argument about optimizing the film thickness might apply. But EP844286 does not disclose or suggest a film. Because a film structure is not disclosed or suggested, there can be no optimization of a property of a film, e.g., its thickness. What is being suggested by the current argument of optimizing film thickness is a transformation of a structure into a structure that is not disclosed or suggested by the reference. This is similar to a reference disclosing a bread box, and then asking that the bread box be pressed into a foil. There is no motivation in EP844286 to transform the disclosed structures into a film. Because there is no disclosure or suggestion of the "support layer" for the coating layer as claimed, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-16, and 18 are patentable over EP844286.

In view of the remarks contained above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the 35 USC §103 rejections, and request that a Formal Notice of Allowance be issued for claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-16, and 18. Should the Examiner have any questions about the above remarks, the undersigned attorney would welcome a telephone call.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael F. Morgan, Esq. (Reg. No. 42,906)
(248) 948-2355
BASF Corporation
26701 Telegraph Road
Southfield, MI 48034-2442
Date: 20 January 2004